

TMIP Peer Review Program Application Package

About TMIP and the Peer Review Program

The Travel Model Improvement Program (TMIP) is a multi-year, multi-agency program sponsored by USDOT and EPA, with the mission of supporting and empowering planning agencies through leadership, innovation and support of travel analysis improvements, to better meet current and future mobility, environmental, safety and security goals. TMIP began operations in 1992, and has three goals:

1. Help build the institutional capacity of planning agencies to perform technical analysis
2. Support development of analytical methods that respond to the needs of planning and environmental decision making processes
3. Support mechanisms to ensure the quality of technical analysis used to meet local, state and federal program requirements.

About Peer Reviews

Peer reviews have been conducted by planning agencies to ensure that technical products, procedures and/or processes being used or developed meet the agency's needs, the standards of professional practice, and/or Federal, state or local planning requirements. Peer reviews of forecasting and data collection procedures are crucial to planning agency model development and improvement efforts. As part of its program, TMIP is committed to assisting agencies in meeting these planning challenges by supporting peer reviews.

TMIP Peer Review Program

TMIP supports peer reviews by funding travel, lodging and per diem for a site visit(s) by peer review panel members. TMIP can also assist in the selection of peer review panel members and help document the review if requested by the sponsoring agency.

This package includes information on the application process for the TMIP Peer Review Program and includes the following:

1. Application Requirements
2. Application Checklist
3. Process for travel reimbursement for non-Federal staff
4. Travel Logistics and Contact Information
5. Travel Expense Form

The TMIP Peer Review Program's selection criteria should be used when applying for support. Applicants should retain all other supporting documents, as they will be necessary to coordinate travel after selection. Program applicants should also note that travel costs for non-federal staff will be reimbursed by the Texas Transportation Institute (TTI) four to six weeks after reimbursement form submittal. TTI cannot pay for travel arrangements before the site visit has occurred or before reimbursement forms are received.

Timing

TMIP expects to begin awards in June 2003. Applicants are encouraged to submit their requests by May 30, 2003. However, requests will be accepted throughout the year and will be evaluated and awarded as funds are available.

Other Peer Programs

The TMIP Peer Review Program is oriented towards technical planning topics. Areas interested in peer programs relating to institutional or policy issues should contact the USDOT Planning Capacity Building's Peer Exchange Program. The contacts for this program are as follows:

At FHWA:

Susan Grosser
Phone: (202) 366-2825
Email: susan.grosser@dot.gov

or

Kenneth Petty
Phone: (202) 366-6654
Email: kenneth.petty@dot.gov

At FTA:

Effie S. Stallsmith
Phone: (202) 366-5653
Email: effie.stallsmith@dot.gov

Application Requirements

Proposal Topic

A written proposal must be submitted by the applicant describing the important planning issue(s) that the technical professionals are trying to address, examples include (but are not limited to):

- Designing and implementing a travel survey
- Other data collection, integration and/or analysis
- Specific travel demand forecasting improvements
- Land use forecasting methods
- Conformity and air quality analyses
- Meeting transit new starts criteria

Plans for Improvement

The proposal should state the desired near term goals for model improvement. The proposal should also include a discussion of what model(s) have been used in the past, what is being used now and what is being considered. The proposal should identify the questions that a peer review is anticipated to help answer.

Selection Criteria

Preference will be given to applicants who address the following selection criteria:

- Planning agency commitment to model improvement (including plans and provisions in work program)
- Proposed procedure(s) are innovative and the agency is committed to implement and use the new procedure(s)
- Peer review assistance is being provided at the model specification/design phase (as opposed to a finished product)

Proposed Panel and Availability

The proposal should include the following information about the proposed peer review panel. Proposed panel member availability should be considered and addressed in the proposal.

- Names of proposed peer review participants
- Panel member expertise area (should be consistent with topic of review)
- Travel, lodging and per diem cost estimates
- Proposed timing of peer review

Page Limitation

The proposal should be limited to 5 pages.

Supporting Information

Proposals should also include the following additional information, if known as the time of submission:

- Proposed Participant biographies
- Contact information

Services by Request

At the request of the participating agencies, staff from the Texas Transportation Institute (TTI) will attend the peer review to evaluate the process and assist in documenting the review. The final documentation whether prepared by the participants or TTI staff, will be provided to the FHWA for the creation of a TMIP Peer Review Program Summary Report, which will be developed once a year. Also by request, FHWA and/or TTI staff can also provide agencies assistance in selecting peer review panel members. In their proposals, agencies should:

- Indicate whether technical support is being requested to prepare a summary report of the review
- Indicate whether assistance is needed to help select peer review panel members

Preferences for Award

Preference will be given to regional planning agencies and councils of governments, metropolitan planning organizations, transit agencies and state departments of transportation.

What Will TMIP Fund?

- Travel, lodging and per diem at government rates will be reimbursed for peer review panel
- Support for documentation assistance (if requested)

What is the Responsibility of the Sponsoring Agency?

- Logistics and communication with the panel
- Food expenses (such as catering)
- Facility arrangements and charges
- Staff time
- Materials

Application Process

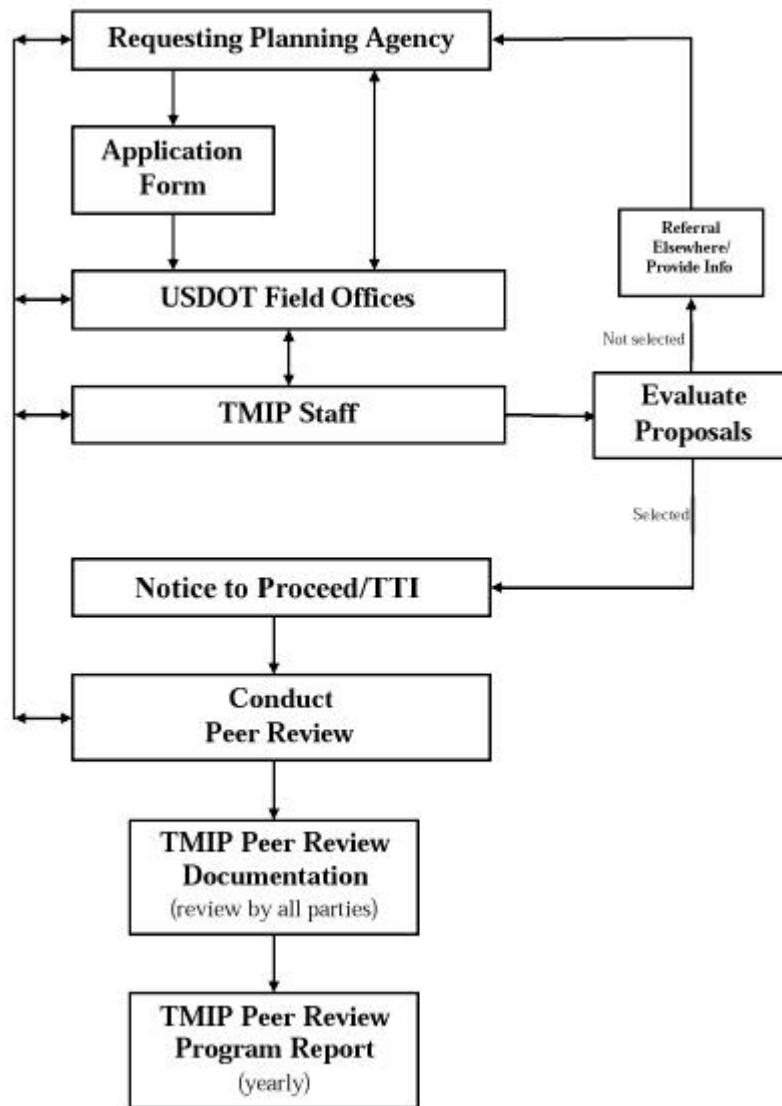
Agencies are required to work with their FHWA Division and FTA Regional Offices to develop their application. Applications from planning agencies are submitted to FHWA or FTA field offices. Applications from planning agencies directly to the TMIP program will not be accepted.

FHWA and FTA field offices should then submit applications in electronic format (no hard copy is required) to:

Sarah Sun
Federal Highway Administration
Office of Environment, Planning and Realty
HEPP-30
1200 New Jersey Ave SE
Washington, DC 20590

Phone: (202) 493-0071
Fax: (202) 493-2198
Email: sarah.sun@dot.gov

TMIP Peer Review Program: Process Overview



Application Check List

Have you completed the following?

1. _____ Written Proposal
2. _____ Contact Information
3. _____ Names of participants (If known at submission time)
4. _____ Participant biographies (If known at submission time)
5. _____ Travel Estimates
6. _____ Request for technical support from Volpe subject experts on preparation of peer review report and/or selection of peer review panel
7. _____ Addressed selection criteria
8. _____ Worked with and submitted proposal with FHWA Division Office and FTA Regional Office

Process for Travel Reimbursement for Non-Federal Staff

Travel costs will be covered for non-federal staff participating in the TMIP Peer Review Program. (Funding for FHWA and FTA Division or Region staff must be covered by existing travel budgets.) Travel reimbursements for non-federal staff are handled by the Texas Transportation Institute (TTI)/Texas A&M Research Foundation (TAM-RF). All questions regarding travel reimbursements should be directed to Gary Thomas at (979) 458-3263.

How do I plan my trip?

- TTI will e-mail you detailed instructions approximately 4-6 weeks before the event.
- You will be responsible for making your own flight arrangements.
- You will be responsible for making your own hotel reservations.
- Both flight and hotel arrangements should be coordinated through FHWA and TTI staff (See Travel Logistics, page 9).

What can be reimbursed?

- Transportation to and from the meeting site including airfare or taxi. Car rental may be reimbursed only when specifically pre-authorized.
- Room and tax at the hotel.
- Parking at "home" airport.
- Meals will be reimbursed per the meal allowance policy (<http://rf-web.tamu.edu/forms/mealrt1.html>) of the Texas A&M Research Foundation.
- Please see the travel policy summary (<http://rf-web.tamu.edu/forms/expacct.html>) of the Texas A&M Research Foundation for more details.

How do I receive my travel reimbursement?

- Download the travel expense form from the TAM-RF web site:
 - Interactive PDF ([http://rf-web.tamu.edu/forms/files/Travel/Expacct\(i\).pdf](http://rf-web.tamu.edu/forms/files/Travel/Expacct(i).pdf))
 - Non-Interactive PDF (<http://rf-web.tamu.edu/forms/files/Travel/Expacct.pdf>)
- Attach originals of all receipts to the Travel Expense Form, including a copy of your travel itinerary issued by the travel agency.
- Mail the completed travel expense form and receipts to Gary Thomas, Texas Transportation Institute, 3135 TAMU, College Station TX, 77843-3135
- TTI/TAM-RF will process the travel expense form and mail a check to the traveler listed on the form. It takes approximately 2-3 weeks for the reimbursement to be completed once the forms and receipts are received by TTI.

Travel Logistics and Contact Information

All travel arrangements including hotel, airline, and other transportation arrangements as well as meeting schedules should be coordinated with Volpe staff.

The primary contact for Peer Review Program Logistics is Gary Thomas, Texas Transportation Institute. Gary will help answer questions as well as coordinate all logistics associated with TMIP's Peer Review Program:

Gary Thomas
TMIP Peer Review Program Manager
Phone: (979) 458-3263
Email: g-thomas@tamu.edu

The primary contact for Peer Review Travel Reimbursement is Gary Thomas (TTI):

Gary Thomas
TMIP Peer Review Program Manager
Phone: (979) 458-3263
Email: g-thomas@tamu.edu

For all other questions concerning the TMIP Peer Review Program goals, applications, and selection, please contact Sarah Sun at the Federal Highway Administration:

Sarah Sun
Phone: (202) 493-0071
Email: sarah.sun@dot.gov